

Surgeon General's Conference on the
Prevention of Preterm Birth

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING WORKGROUP

Co-Chairs

Hal C. Lawrence, III, M.D.

*American College of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists*

Carolyn Aoyama, C.N.M., M.P.H.

Indian Health Service



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Key Issues

- All health care and public health professionals need to have preterm birth information included in their training.
- Prenatal care offers an important management opportunity (84% get 1st trimester care).

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Key Issues

- Elective inductions or cesarean deliveries should not be performed prior to 39 weeks of gestation.
- Potential negative consequences of preterm birth must be emphasized.

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Key Issues

- Although the theory of integrated care (behavioral counseling plus medical care) is known, resources often don't exist to implement it in practice.
- Women need primary care that includes preconception education. Families need to be included in this education.
- Effect of training should be evaluated.

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Short-term Goals

- Who should be taught
 - All health care professionals and professionals who educate the public (including but not limited to physicians, dental professionals, pharmacists, nurses and advance practice nurses, physicians assistants, teachers, social workers, nutritionists, health educators, etc.)

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Short-term Goals

- What should be taught
 - Only medically indicated deliveries before 39 weeks of gestation
 - Outcome data for babies delivered ≤ 38 weeks of gestation (financial, emotional, family and societal costs)
 - Risk factors (medical, psychosocial, demographic/racial, social determinants) for and effective treatments to prevent preterm delivery

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Short-term Goals

- What should be taught (cont.)
 - Importance of pre- and inter-conception health care (including ongoing wellness care/primary care plus specifics that deal with pregnancy)
 - Need for basic and clinical research on the cause of preterm delivery
 - Methods for translating evidence from research findings into practice

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Short-term Goals

- How it should be taught
 - Include in curricula for all health science and public health education programs
 - Encourage organizations and government agencies to develop and disseminate educational programs and materials and to conduct and incorporate ongoing evaluation

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Short-term Goals

- How it should be taught (cont.)
 - Identify key stakeholders who can promote the importance of knowledge about preterm labor/birth to other specialties/disciplines
 - Use clinical sites for educational opportunities
 - Provide online training that includes the “what” (potentially using existing programs such as March of Dimes)

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Mid-term Goals

- Who should be taught
 - All health care professionals and professionals who educate the public (see audiences listed earlier)
 - Elected officials, hospital administrators, policy makers, higher education leaders, business community, insurance providers

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Mid-term Goals

- What should be taught
 - Ways to encourage the discussion of a reproductive life plan with both women and men (to decrease the incidence of childbearing at the extremes of reproductive age)
 - Skills related to promoting health literacy as part of behavioral change

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Mid-term Goals

- What should be taught (cont.)
 - New research findings (integrate into curricula)
 - The impacts of new curricula and policy changes

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Mid-term Goals

- What should be taught (cont.)
 - Awareness of the need to have psychosocial/behavioral health services immediately available to perinatal and women's health care providers and their patients and to have those services supported by health care funders

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Mid-term Goals

- How it should be taught
 - Disseminate research information on causative factors of preterm labor (bring laboratory to the bedside)
 - Encourage organizations to inform policy makers about key issues related to preterm labor and birth

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Mid-term Goals

- How it should be taught (cont.)
 - Monitor incorporation of knowledge by linking evidence-based management of preterm labor to certification, re-certification, and Maintenance of Certification
 - Reconvene state of the science update conferences

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Long-term Goals

- Continue ongoing education about preterm labor for all health care providers (curriculum goals will be fully implemented, and new research will have been included in curricula)
- Continue to ensure that all preterm deliveries are medically indicated
- Ensure all preterm deliveries occur in appropriate-level facilities

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Long-term Goals

- Incorporate the now-identified core etiology of preterm birth in education
- Ensure that all health care professionals practice patient-centered care incorporating a life-course perspective that emphasizes the different psychosocial/behavioral risk experienced by different groups